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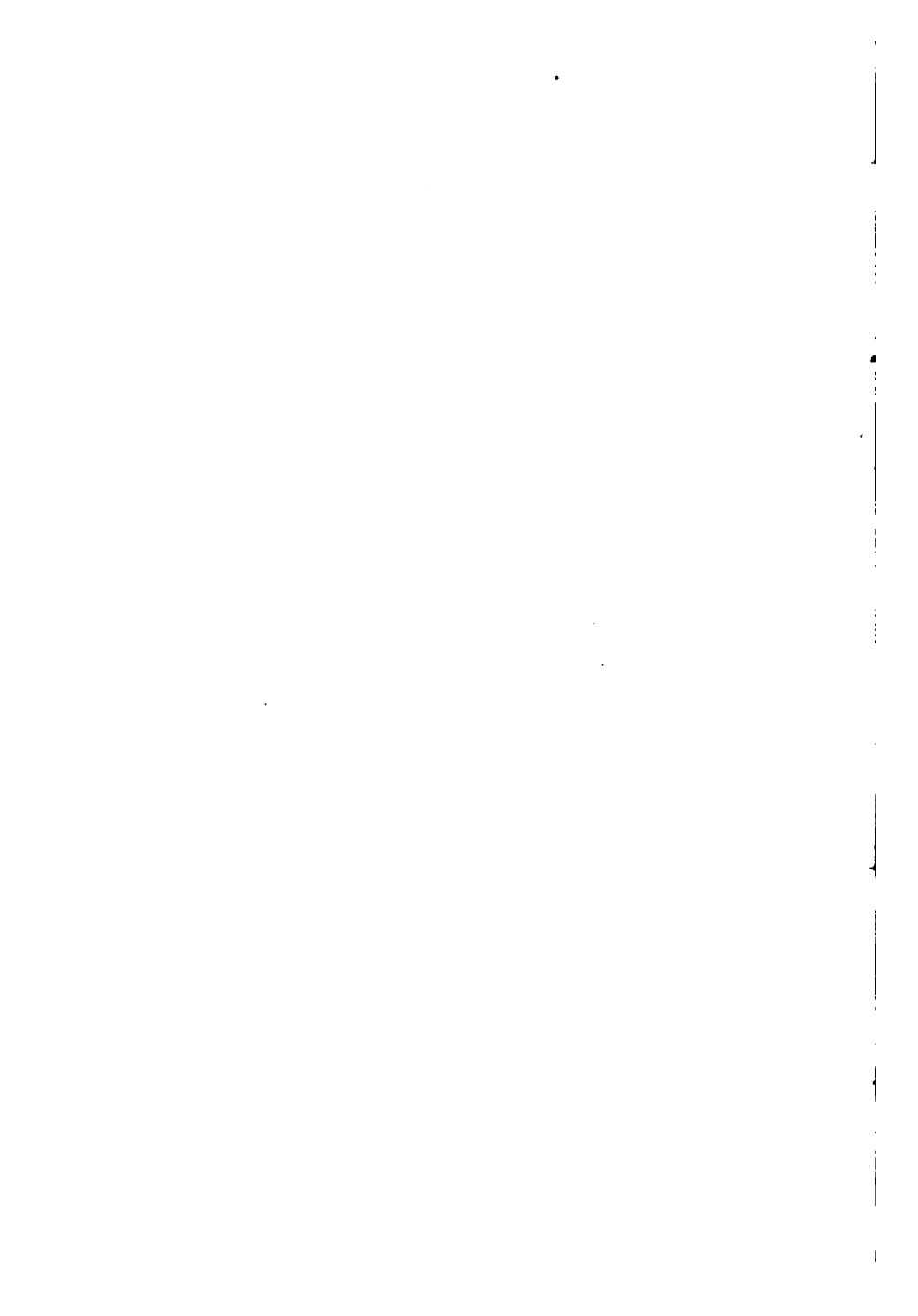




## HUMAN NATURE.

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"Zu was Besserm sind wir geboren  
Und was die innere Stimme spricht  
Das täuscht die hoffende Seele nicht."  
Schiller.



# HUMAN NATURE.

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A PHILOSOPHICAL EXPOSITION OF THE DIVINE  
INSTITUTION OF

REWARD AND PUNISHMENT,

WHICH OBTAINS IN THE PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND  
MORAL CONSTITUTIONS OF

M A N ;

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SERIES OF ETHICAL OBSERVATIONS,

WRITTEN DURING THE PERUSAL OF THE REV. JAMES MARTINEAU'S

RECENT WORK, ENTITLED,

"ENDEAVOURS AFTER THE CHRISTIAN LIFE."

L O N D O N :

JOHN CHAPMAN, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

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## P R E F A C E.

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I WAS induced to write the following Exposition of the Divine Institution of Reward and Punishment, by reading a passage on the same subject in the Rev. James Martineau's book, entitled, "Endeavours after the Christian Life." The idea contained therein seems to me at variance with true philosophy; and as it is referred to in the Exposition, I have transcribed the passage at the commencement. The Ethical Observations which are added were inscribed upon the margins of the book above mentioned, during the course of its perusal, without any idea of publication, or even of being printed: indeed, they were first copied for a friend who wished them to be bound up with Mr. Martineau's book in their written state.

But it appeared that other copies would be required, and therefore it was requested that they might be printed for private circulation. It was thought however that if the notes were of sufficient interest and value to be printed for private, they ought to be for public circulation, inasmuch as it is the duty of every one to contribute according to his capabilities to the public service, and that what is useful or profitable to the few, is equally necessary, and should be rendered available to all.

Thus I have been induced to publish this little book, imperfect as it is, and (so far as the notes are concerned), from the nature of the Observations, entirely deficient in consecutive arrangement.

As all the Observations were written exclusively in reference to particular passages in Mr. Martineau's work, and without any anticipation of their being published, it is probable that they may contain some slight repetition of thought or expression. The circumstances in which they were written

must form an apology for the presence of any such imperfections.

In order to render the Observations more completely intelligible, I have thought it desirable to transcribe from Mr. Martineau's work, those passages to which they more especially refer. In so doing, I have carefully endeavoured to embody his full meaning on the subjects discussed; at the same time to avoid augmenting too much the bulk of the book by lengthy quotations. By this means the necessity of continual reference is obviated, and the book rendered complete in itself.

Nevertheless, I venture to indulge a hope that if the reader have not already seen Mr. Martineau's work, his curiosity may be stimulated concerning it; for although it appears to me to contain some sentiments incompatible with sound ethical conclusions, it is a most valuable volume of Discourses, (especially the last,) rich in thought and suggestion, which is clothed in the purest and most beautiful language.

In consequence of the engrossing character of my occupations, it was impossible that I could do more in this brief work than evolve the principle, leaving to some future time, or more efficient hands, the fuller indication of its applicability.

I may only add here, that if it were traced out in its most important relations, I believe that this principle would cast a light upon many theoretical and practical subjects, now seemingly difficult and obscure.

For example, were the questions of *necessity*, *free agency* and *intuition* investigated through its medium; as likewise capital punishment, the mode of development of the passions, and hence the causes and means of prevention of many moral evils now prevalent in our Social system,—I am convinced that new and original views would be generated, affording a solution of these perplexing problems.

## ERRATA.

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- Page 4, line 22, *for immergeth read mergeth.*  
7, 22, *for foundation read fountain.*  
11, 16, *for Know the Lord read Know ye the Lord.*  
12, 17, *for immerge read merge.*  
17, 15, *after IN-formations insert semicolon.*  
17, 17, *for semicolon read comma.*  
27, 8, *erase the word superfluous.*  
33, 8, *after energy insert comma.*  
33, 9, *for and increase read an increase.*  
64, 6, *erase comma.*  
64, 7, *after talents insert semicolon.*  
71, 5, *erase the word as.*

elements which primarily contribute to the origin and formation of the religious and political institutions, societary arrangements and civilizations, that now are.

Upon these the history of the past is inscribed in living characters. All the true, essentially good, and vital things, which have relation to man; all living deeds that were ever done, are concentrated and immortal in us. We are the mirrors of the past. In us may be discovered the laws of the Universe, so far as they have hitherto been evolved.

The perception and application of these laws or principles constitute science; and in proportion as we attain to a knowledge of them, will our actions become conformable thereto, and thereby correct, certain, and successful in all their consequences.

Many of the laws which prevail in the material creation have been already discovered, and hence the certainty with which results may be calculated, and inevitable consequences predicted.

Astronomy, Chemistry, and other sciences of the Physical world, are now built upon foundations

that can never be moved. We have no sectaries or divisions here, concerning those things which are established. But their numerous and diversified discoveries and labours, become all collected and concentrated into one common focus. They all converge and tend to *One*, Unity, and Universality. All are progressing in the same path—onwards; uttering, echoing, and re-echoing the same great truths; and confirming the fixedness and immutability of those laws which have been established by him “in whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning.”

The laws which pervade and govern the affective, intellectual, and spiritual spheres, are likewise unchangeable and perfect. But they are laws to which we have not yet fully attained. The evolution and living perception of these follow last in the order of development. They are inscribed in the innermost part of the scroll, and are as yet but partially and imperfectly unfolded.

As the minute particles of vapour in the air, unite and become a water drop, thence a rivulet,

thence a river ; which as it flows onwards, receives continual accessions, and thus increases, widens, and expands itself into the mighty ocean ; so the soul which at the advent of its incarnation, is a most delicate individual germ planted into flesh, there to discover its own peculiar nourishment, and incorporate and assimilate it with itself ; shall become developed and augmented as it passes on in the progressive path, first attaining to a perception of the material and individual which will become continually enlarged by new accessions, and thus shall it advance and widen into regions, where other principles, and higher laws prevail ; where the psychical nature is so fully developed and evolved, that it becomes susceptible, and perceptive of God's highest and all-comprehensive principle, within which all others are blended and contained ; where the apparently innumerable laws which pervade creation, converge into Unity, and the soul's consciousness augmented and expanded into those immeasurable depths whence it immergeth into the ocean of Universality.



The Religions of the world hitherto have, for the most part, proceeded on assumption; the truths they may have contained have been partial and distorted. Imagination has supplied the place of reason. They have never sought for the warrant of divine laws in their execution. Their creeds have been framed on asserted principles which have no foundation in nature, and must inevitably pass away. They are as trees whose roots have not gone down into the life Kingdom; therefore can have no abiding vitality: whose leaves wither with the first radiations of truth; whose sap the first blast of reason dries up,—and thus having no life in them they perish from the earth.

The enunciations of the most divinely inspired minds, who have declared the laws of our nature from the loftiest mount of vision which has yet been attained, have all been changed and perverted; their deep significance misinterpreted to meet the convenience of party cavillings, or the quarrels of self-designated divines. Their most holy and elevated purposes have been corrupted

and turned aside to minister to the cravings of grasping ambition, or the gratifications of insatiable avarice. Even the grandeur of Christianity has been obscured, its sublimest designs have been thwarted, its truths distorted and defaced, and in practice the spirit of its doctrines would seem to have departed, preserving but their form to be converted into an engine of selfish aggrandizement, or the increase of political or ecclesiastical power. Its purest precepts have been seized upon and debased into a warrant and pretext for the tortures of the Inquisition, and the bloodiest persecutions.

That religion, which was preeminently one of humility, love, brotherly kindness, and universal charity, has been rendered subservient to authorise the assumption of the most arrogant superiority and haughty distinction, in all our social arrangements whether civil or religious; to justify the horrors of war, to serve as a covering for the blackest falsehoods, for the committal of every species of injustice and the perpetration of the foulest crimes that ever disgraced humanity.

Such are the religions that have been. Such is the picture of the *past*. But a brighter hope for man is dawning in the horizon of the *future*.

The nature of right and wrong will no longer rest on simple affirmation, or the mere written words of any time or nation. The sublime truths of our nature will not as heretofore be taught in the harsh tones of dictatorial dogmatism, appealing to threats and fear to enforce their reception; but they shall be deduced, and take their authority from the understanding. Reason shall be their helpmate; Charity their herald; Faith their inspiration; and Perfection their reward.

But before such results can appear, men must discern the true nature and object of Religion. They must perceive that its purpose is the progressive unfolding and development of their **ENTIRE BEING**. The tempting forth of all the faculties of man. **IT IS THE EDUCATION OF THE SOUL FROM UNCONSCIOUSNESS TO CONSCIOUSNESS.** It is **EDUCATION**. It is "a foundation of living waters springing up into everlasting life." It

is reunion of the human with the divine nature ; Christ in us—a vivifying spirit.

It dwelleth not in mere forms ;—it eludeth all attempt at embodiment. It clotheth itself with language as with a garment, from which it escapeth, as its texture assumeth the quality of fixedness and custom, It liveth in perpetual formations and RE-formations. It will not be petrified into words ; PROGRESSION is its law, and the most cunningly devised creeds can never contain it.

RELIGION, or the science of human Culture and development, is the loftiest of every department of philosophy, and to which all others must yield subserviency and contribution.

Yet of all sciences, hitherto, it has perhaps been the one most neglected. Systems of the grossest error and confusion, have supplied the place of rationality and truth. Clearness has been sacrificed to mystery—and the enlightening powers of reason and the understanding have been held in the darksome fetters of superstition.

But the day is not far distant when these

shackles shall be broken off; when by the effulgent radiations of intelligence, these mysteries shall be for ever dispersed; when the soul, bursting its fetters of ignorance and obscurity, shall bloom in the beauty of its own expansiveness and never-ceasing progression: when it shall discover and assert the laws and conditions of its **ENTIRE BEING**, and erect the superstructure of a philosophy, founded on these and the relations it sustains to the Great First Cause, rather than on experience, or the aspects it may have presented in any past portion or period of its history, A philosophy not dependent on place, circumstances, or time for its realization; whose adaptability is equal in the immortal as the mortal sphere—eternal as its subject—and whose records are inscribed on the tablets of the universal heart.

The enlightening rays of this philosophy, have already penetrated the thick films and mists that surround us, and are beginning to shine forth faintly on the minds of men, and they shall yet discover the nature of their own mental and psychological constitutions, by the light of continual reve-

lation, as it emanates from the being which it shall have developed and matured.

All discoveries in science and the arts, are but other forms of revelation, manifested in the more exclusively intellectual or material spheres.

But as soon as man shall perceive that a compliance with the spiritual laws will be followed by discoveries or revelations of a spiritual nature; just as surely as that compliance with the intellectual or material laws, will inevitably ensure discoveries or revelations in the arts and sciences;—when he shall discern the significance of that sublime declaration of Christ, “Blessed are the ~~pure~~ in heart, for they shall ~~see~~ God,” and thus act in obedience to the condition here enunciated, by a life conformable to the precepts of this greatest of teachers;—then (and not until then) will his spiritual nature become unfolded, his psychical perceptions vivified and matured, and his soul an incarnation of Divinity: for “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?” whence shall emanate a continual revelation; and all man’s actions shall pro-

ceed from the fountain of spontaneity, or impulsive intuition. Then will his *entire nature* be evolved, all his faculties unfolded, and *genius* become the universal endowment of humanity.

Inventions and discoveries will then necessarily follow in the physical, intellectual and psychical portions of our nature, until it may be said in the symbolical language of old, that "Men behold their maker face to face;" that "they shall need not that any man should teach them;" but realize the declaration of the prophet, "I WILL PUT MY LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS, AND WRITE IT IN THEIR HEARTS; AND WILL BE THEIR GOD AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. AND THEY SHALL TEACH NO MORE EVERY MAN HIS NEIGHBOUR, AND EVERY MAN HIS BROTHER, SAYING, KNOW THE LORD, FOR THEY SHALL ALL KNOW ME FROM THE LEAST OF THEM UNTO THE GREATEST OF THEM, SAITH THE LORD."

Religion which hitherto hath appeared little more than mere assumption and affirmation of truths partial and limited in their significance, and applicability, dependent on passive assent, and

blind submissiveness for their establishment and authority, will ere long change her garments, and assert herself THE GREAT PRIMARY SCIENCE, including within her circle, Theology, Psychology and every department of Philosophy which hath ever yet been known. These will become her tributaries, and constitute the materials of which her palace shall be erected, thus imparting to them their proportionate and essential value, character and importance.

All knowledge is vain and useless, so long as it remaineth detached, without any higher aim and purpose. Its ultimate object must be beyond itself. Nay, it cannot long exist in isolation. It must become vital, by virtue of its relations and contributions to that one philosophy in which all others must immerge, the philosophy of human culture and development.

God is infinite in *being*, hence he is infinite in Wisdom and power, therefore infinite in happiness, for *being* is the antecedent and originator of these.

The greatest characteristic of a genuine, com-



prehensive science of human nature—of TRUE RELIGION, is the recognition that *being* is the greatest good, it is the one and only source whence happiness is derived, it is the designer and executor of every thing which exists.

When man shall become livingly conscious of this great principle, when he shall appreciate and realize its full significance and applicability, then will the vastness and sublime propriety of Christ's declaration appear: "the Kingdom of God is within you," then all divisions amongst mankind shall cease, all disputation and strife shall be forgotten; the innumerable sects and parties that perplex and confuse themselves with questions concerning Heaven and Hell, Reward and Punishment, Right and Wrong, now seemingly so mysterious and obscure, will discover and be amazed at their manifest clearness and simplicity, and the extreme facility of their solution.

Assuming as an axiom that *being* is the greatest good, the antecedent and originator of all happiness, then man's greatest duty is immediately discoverable, and will consist in the *enlarge-*

*ment and development of himself BY MEANS OF ACTION.*

And here is the balance in which all actions may be weighed, and their title to the appellation of good or evil justified. They will be found to derive their nature, or quality denominated virtuous, according to the power they possess of contributing to form, expand, and evolve the true or God-like nature of man. And hence the nature or quality of actions denominated vicious is derived from the power they possess of obstructing the growth and development of the God-like nature, and substituting the self-nature in its place. All relative degrees of good and evil derive their classification from this source. "Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this, the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it."\*

A philosophical and true standard of *right* and *wrong*, *good* and *evil*, to which every action may be referred, is the only foundation of all true ethics.

\* Emerson.

It is this alone which can generate a religion permanently serviceable to man. For a perfect apprehension of the nature of *good* and *evil* would be the sure impulse and motive force whence all action would originate, and by means of which results might be calculated and secured, with as much certainty as that the seasons will continue their appointed revolution. Seeing that every volition would be founded on faith, faith on conviction, and conviction on the deductions of the understanding.

“For clear, exact, and certain knowledge of what is conducive to happiness in the truest and most comprehensive sense of that term, as **SURELY** determines the course of conduct denominated virtuous, (as far as that knowledge extends,) as the most perfect acquaintance with any given physical phenomena can ensure the production of any given physical result.

“Men are no more capable of doing voluntarily what they are **CERTAIN** will involve them in misery, than a stone is capable of its own accord of flying upwards. Were it otherwise, human

beings would possess no moral nature, and would be capable of no moral conduct." \*

"The fools and the madmen to whom mists are realities, are satisfied in their judgments; but it is not so with those who see dimly through the fog, and suspect there may be better paths than those they are pursuing. This suspicion, as light breaks in, may at last become conviction strong enough to subdue even the habit or inclination by which a wrong path is made easy, and a departure from it difficult. Here, indeed, such overpowering conviction may not reach the majority of mankind AT PRESENT: they may be compelled, as heretofore, to wear out life in struggles between right and wrong, between inclination and duty, between future good and present solicitation, but are we forbidden to hope, for future generations, a gradual alleviation of so painful a conflict, in proportion as what is good, and what is evil, shall be made plainer to the eye of reason? *At least may we affirm, that all learning has, or ought to have this consummation in view.*" †

\* Westminster Review, October 1830.

† Smart's Outline of Sematology.

When this consummation *shall be fully* realized; when the nature of what is good, and what is evil, in the widest sense of these terms, shall be no more problematical and obscure, or dependent upon the arbitrary definitions of system-building sectaries; but based on the sure foundations of unerring reason and easily demonstrable to all; when the conviction shall become universal, that "the kingdom of God is within us," and that man's greatest good consists in its accession and enlargement; and consequently his first duty in the attainment thereof; THEN shall a oneness of aim throughout humanity be established; the life purpose of all men will consist in successive and perpetual self IN-formations, instead of the antagonism and dividing influences which have hitherto prevailed amongst men; they shall be inspired and animated by the Spirit of love to render mutual contribution and aid in the great work of building up their interior being.

All science, and the outward world, will become subordinate to the realization of this primary object. A unity will be imparted to life. All actions

will become ennobled by their connection and tendency to the same general purpose, and receive the impress of a sacred character. Education will be exalted to the loftiest rank of our vocations; the hidden significance and importance of childhood will be fully apprehended; its confiding innocence and sincerity will be revered, as the budding manifestation of a holy and immortal spirit, which must be evolved and imbued with a sense of the awful responsibilities that await it: and thus shall man rise to a consciousness of the dignity and grandeur of his nature.

*To this end the seed-like origin and growth of the mind must also be PRACTICALLY recognized as a fundamental principle of this noblest science,—the Religion or education of humanity.* All nature is pregnant with this fact. The ordinations of Deity ever repeat themselves, and are the same throughout every department of Creation. All things containing life are seminal in the beginning, and developed from within. The entire animal and vegetable kingdoms are pervaded by this principle, and both are equally subject to the same law.

First the seed, then the stalk, and afterwards the ear ; first the germ, then the unconscious infant, and afterwards the man ; for he is no exception to this universal law. His existence is, as it were, a creation from the kingdom of death and chaos unto life and light ; and this assimilation to **BEING** is ever by the most silent and invisible mode, and so gradual in its progress that it will scarcely be detected by the most vigilant eye. Its growth can only be ascertained by comparison of distinct epochs, and not by continual observation.

Every nation, the whole of human society, is likewise subject to this all-pervading principle, and hath arisen from an obscure and unnoticeable point, which formed the nucleus of all future accessions, and whence its influence hath again radiated outwards upon all around.

And, further, the region of thought and feeling, or the generation, evolution, and maturity of our intellectual, moral, and sentient nature is regulated and governed by the same general law.

The powers of Genius however brilliant and extensive ; the intellect in all its grandeur and com-

prehensiveness; the most towering and lofty imagination; the boldest conception; the profoundest sentiment, or intensest passion which can engage or animate the human soul, were all once feeble and insignificant, and are what they are, by virtue of the law of progression; whose power has raised them from the condition of the seed in which they all *pre*-existed, to their present fulness and perfection.

In like manner the mighty thoughts which at times have so terribly agitated and convulsed the world, and to which its civilizations have vibrated from the very centre to the circumference; those silent and invisible agents to which all others yield obedience; those living fountains of unceasing change; those perpetual formers and *re*-formers; those parents of epochs and originators of revolutions; whose appearance fills the despot with apprehension and fear; at whose bidding the foundations of his empire tremble; whose weapons of destruction are unseen, and therefore cannot be averted; whose powers are invincible and continually augmented by their tributary—Time; whose vitality



is immortal; and before whose irresistible fiat all civil and religious institutions, all social arrangements whatsoever, not founded on Truth and Love, must inevitably be swept into the Chaos of Oblivion; even these mightiest agents of man which are now diffused throughout the earth, and animate the myriads which inhabit it, were once as impotent as they now are powerful; and instead of having the hearts of millions for their habitation were once confined to the narrow bounds of one isolated being, whence they originated, were evolved and disseminated for growth and reproduction.

For as the lofty oak was once contained in the acorn, the flower folded in the seed, so the thoughts which are now expanded and diffused throughout the universe of humanity once existed only in an individual and private heart, where they lay infolded and possessed of an eternal vitality.

Moreover it is an universal law of life, equally pervading the kingdom of thought, or the spiritual sphere, as in that of organization, that *in exact proportion to the length of time required for the evolution or maturity of any element or being will be*

*the degree of its perfection.* The development and permanency of the vegetable and animal creations, of man, of nations, of universal society, are all regulated in conformity with this great principle.

Every attribute appears in the order of its excellence, the inferior first, the superior last. First, the physical, then the intellectual and affective, and lastly the spiritual or psychical natures of man are unfolded into view.

So from the root

"Springs lighter the green stalk; from thence the leaves  
More airy; last the bright consummate flower  
Spirits odorous breathe."

PARADISE LOST.

In the progression of civilization or universal humanity, the same principle is likewise apparent. First the physical, then the intellectual, and afterwards the moral elements of society are evolved. Or, in other words, nations are first governed by the law of Might, secondly by the law of Right, and lastly by the law of LOVE.

The expansiveness and grandeur of the landscape, is limited to the observer who has climbed but a short distance up the mountain, and his

vision is speedily obscured by the mists of the valley beneath ; so in the scale of existence those beings who have not far to travel ere they reach maturity, whose progressive path is short, and the advance therein quickly accomplished ; are limited in their capacities, their extent of being is confined within narrow bounds, the duration of their enjoyment is short, and life is quickly overshadowed by the clouds of gradual extinction and death.

On the other hand by ascending to the summit of the mountain, the wide expanse and grandeur of the scene is brought completely into sight, and the circle of vision becomes illimitable. So man, whose rank in the scale of being is pre-eminently superior to all other creatures, whose cycle of development is extended over a vast period of time, whose path towards maturity hath never yet been fully traversed or explored, but conducteth into the infinite, and whose aspirations are lofty as heaven, is endued in his onward progress, with extended capacities, with an augmentation of power, an accession of being,—his

futurity hath no conceivable bounds, since his psychical development is not completed within his mortal career ; he ascends to a point of view elevated above the influence of all transitory things, and like the observer on the mountain, his horizon is expanded, his circle of vision widened and enlarged until it verges into the infinite ; he passes the confines of the valley where the mists of fear, doubt, or hope obscure his sight, or where the clouds of death may overshadow him, and is enabled to gaze through the transparent azure of perfect faith, into the illimitable and eternal ; and to behold the boundless sphere of his everlasting progression, towards the perfection of his Creator, and the growth and completion of his immortality.

EXPOSITION OF THE DIVINE INSTITUTE OF REWARD AND PUNISHMENT.

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" In many an hospital of mental disease (as it is called) you have doubtless seen a melancholy being pacing to and fro with rapid strides, and lost to everything around, wringing his hands in incommunicable suffering, and letting fall a low mutter, rising quickly into the shrill cry; his features cut with the graver of sharp anguish; his eyelids drooping, (for he never sleeps,) and showering ever scalding tears.

" It is the maniac of remorse, possibly indeed made wretched by merely imaginary crimes; but just as possibly maddened by too true a recollection, and what the world would esteem too scrupulous a conscience. Listen to him and you will often be surprised into fresh pity, to find how seemingly slight are the offences, injuries perhaps of mere unripened thought, which feed the fires, and whirl the lash of this incessant woe. He is the dread type of Hell.—*Endeavours after the Christian Life, by the Rev. James Martineau. Page 216, 217.*

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THE notion concerning the nature of Hell embodied in the foregoing passage appears to me decidedly incorrect. It is very necessary, if not absolutely indispensable to the formation of a

correct conception of the nature of Hell, to be previously in possession of a *clear, exact, and certain* knowledge, concerning the nature of Heaven, in its highest and most perfect sense, and of those primary elements of which it is constituted, and upon which it depends for the fulness of its realization.

For as happiness and misery, reward and punishment, or Heaven and Hell are diametrically opposite in their nature, and like the two poles of the sphere, constitute the two extremes of our being; I am disposed to believe that were we to obtain correct notions concerning the nature and constituent elements of the one, the other might easily be inferred; as in the positive and negative principles so manifest in electricity and magnetism, and indeed which may be discovered to pervade the entire system of the Universe.

My wish before proceeding further in this inquiry, will be to induce a strong, vivid, and livingly conscious conception of the infinite, the incalculable value of life; comprehending as it does our *entire being* in its most significant and

extended sense. "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" "The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment."\*

Indeed life is of such immense, unspeakable value, that it is vain and ineffectual to attempt conveying by mere words, any adequate idea of the supreme and infinite superiority of **BEING**, superfluous to every other consideration or acquisition, of which the soul is capable. It alone imparteth value to all surrounding things; and were it extinguished, all the importance, beauty, and worth of this universe as relating to man, would necessarily exist no more.

A moment's pause and reflection will suffice to convince the most trivial thinker of the justice of this position, and to impress him with a deep consciousness of this vast truth.

If then this be true, that *life* or *Being*, comprehending the physical, intellectual and affective nature of man ~~be~~ the "Alpha and Omega" the "all in all," the fountain whence all things else proceed;

\* Christ.

if it be so valuable that the whole world sinks into nothingness in comparison, and is valueless without it ; then the very *smallest degree of development, the very slightest increase of the capabilities or faculties constituting BEING, must necessarily be the thing most worthy our highest aspirations, and the greatest conceivable reward that could be bestowed for just action*, or obedience to the divine laws as imprinted in our nature. Or again take another and perhaps more correct view of the subject.

God is infinite in power, wisdom and goodness—consequently perfect in happiness—for these attributes in perfection are the generators of perfect happiness ; therefore the greatest conceivable reward or Heaven which man is capable of realizing, will consist in a progress and assimilation of himself to the fulness and perfection of God.

Now if this be correct, then the very slightest cessation of development or progression, the smallest possible decrease of those capabilities or faculties constituting BEING, must necessarily be the thing demanding our most serious and earnest deprecation, and the greatest conceivable punish-



ment or Hell that Deity could inflict, or the soul of man endure, for unjust action or disobedience to the Divine laws as imprinted in our nature. Or in other words, if God be infinite in power, wisdom and goodness, and consequently perfect in happiness; the greatest absolute suffering of which man is capable, will consist in a gradual extinction of those faculties and attributes, which in their fulness of perfection, distinguish, and pre-eminently constitute the character of the Creator: in a deadly decession, or dying from God.

If we examine into the nature of our constitutions, physically, intellectually and morally, analyze the laws which obtain in each of these departments of our being, and trace the analogies and relations observable in each, to the others, we shall discover a system of harmony and beauty where one great principle commands and pervades our entire nature.

It would seem that our existence, in its action, and inaction, its obedience and disobedience, its virtue and vice, is as an oscillation between the

two extremes or poles which compass our being. The one positive, the other negative; the one good, the other evil; the one a progression, the other a retrogression; the one union with the Divinity, the other disunion from him; the one life, the other annihilation.

The two spherul poles contain within their diameter the entire sphere.

God and negation are the two spiritual poles, positive and negative, within which is contained our entire being.

God, the positive extreme, is infinite in Being, in Perfection, and in Happiness; consequently man has an infinite sphere for infinite progression towards infinity.

As Being is antecedent to knowing, doing, or possessing; and the creator and container of these, and thereby of happiness; I repeat, the highest good for man consists in a conscious, *increase and progression in Being; or assimilation to God.*

Negation, or the negative extreme of our existence, is finite in character; it is absence of Being;

it is the definite, terminating point attained by annihilation ; consequently man has but a finite sphere, for finite retrogression towards psychical negation.

As Negation is the opposite of Being, man's greatest absolute evil consists in an UNCONSCIOUS *decrease and retrogression of being towards Negation ; or decession from God.*

The Primal law or condition of Life, is Action : if this law be recognized and obeyed by any portion of our nature whatsoever, the corresponding recompense will certainly be awarded. This recompense will consist, as I have previously said, in an augmentation of the faculties exercised ; in a progressive increase of their capacities and power.

In other words it is a conquering from the Kingdom of Inertia and Death, (whose laws are also ever active and immutable,) to the Kingdoms of Activity and Life.

If on the contrary, this first law of our nature be not recognised, and obeyed by any part of our constitution, that part will certainly suffer in a corresponding degree, and the penalty will consist

in deadly retrogression and decrease of the faculties in their capacities and power, or in being conquered from the Kingdom of Activity and Life, to the Kingdom of Inertia and Death. It may as well be observed here, that the Divine Institution of Reward and Punishment, as above set forth, is the very ideal of perfect equity.

God's court of eternal justice is never prorogued. His Judgments are not postponed. With him there can be no past or future, but all is concentrated into an everlasting Now. He never delays his benefits or penalties; but rewards or punishes every act of obedience or transgression, in the very moment of its performance.

Moreover in every sentence, there is no departure from impartiality; but reward or punishment, accession or decession of Being is infallibly determined in exact proportion to the deserts, be they good or evil. The balance of God is always suspended, and without possibility of error. His calcule transcends our most skilful arithmetic.

In order more clearly and fully to make evident these views concerning the nature of Divine retri-

bution, or Heaven and Hell; I will proceed to illustrate them by a few obvious examples. Let us observe for a moment the nature of the muscle. If in obedience to the primal law of existence, viz., *Action*, this organ be adequately exercised, the reward for thus acting in conformity to the physical law will consist in a decided accession to the fibre constituting the muscle, by a more intense energy and increase of power, and augmentation of absolute physical life. Consider the arm of the Blacksmith and Pugilist as confirmatory of this evident fact. Here is the explanation of what we call the strength of habit.

If, on the other hand, the dictates of this immutable and universal principle be disregarded, if adequate exercise or work of the muscle be neglected, the penalty is equally certain, and will consist of a decided decession of the fibre constituting the muscle, by a less intense energy, a decrease of power, a diminution of absolute physical Life.

A slight inspection of the thousands living in physical indolence around us will likewise suffice to manifest the truth of this assertion.

Let us take an example from the nervous system in relation to this principle. The function of the nerve is to convey to the mind accurate conceptions of the forms and disposition of outward things.

Now in precise proportion as the requirements of the life-law in its relations to this sense are complied with, or the faculty exercised, will be the augmentation of the power thereof; facility in the discernment of objects will become enlarged, the perception more delicate and refined, and, consequently, the mental impressions more exquisite and correct. In other words, the organ will attain a degree of development exactly corresponding to the amount of exercise it may have received. Its every action will be rewarded by manifest accession of absolute sentient and perceptive BEING. To prove this truth, I need only refer to the Pianist, whose sense of touch has become so developed by continual cultivation that an ignorant observer would be ready to conclude her performance miraculous, and each finger an organ of vision, so skilful and unerring do they appear in the execution of their task.

Perhaps, more striking still is the perfect development of this sentient life in the blind, who, as the reward of unceasing action of this faculty, are enabled even to discriminate colours and decipher the alphabet.

Disobedience and neglect of the conditions instituted for the development of this organ, will be accompanied by a penalty proportionate to the crime; the facility in the discrimination of objects will become contracted, the perception blunted and obtuse; and consequently the mental impressions less vivid and correct. In other words, the sin of inaction will be punished by absolute decrease and death of the sentient and perceptive Being. Men whose lives are spent in exclusive muscular labour are of this class, and amply confirm the truth of this position.

But the sense of touch has yet another function, viz., to indicate by pain, any injuries that may be committed on the surface of the body. For instance, if I burn my finger (supposing this sense in a fair state of development), I shall experience acute pain. Now this pain is as the crying of the

watchman when the castle is stormed ; it is the alarm that evil is near ; it is the *physical conscience* exclaiming, " You are doing wrong ; you are destroying your constitution ;" and thus it compels me to desist. But just so far as wrong has been committed will punishment be awarded. This portion of my being will suffer death in a degree, the sentient power will be diminished, the voice of the Watchman becomes fainter, the *physical conscience* is deadened ; although the pain or *physical remorse* may for some time continue. Were the fingers (regardless of past intimations) burnt a second, third, or fourth time, the pain would gradually decrease in amount, the protector of the organic tissues would become weakened and disarmed ; the alarm of nature's Watchman would be scarcely audible ; the voice of the physical conscience, which in pain had cried aloud when evil approached, would dwindle into the faintness of a whisper, until by successive repetitions and persistence in wrong, it became utterly extinct ; all traces of pain or further remorse annihilated ; and now, the hand may be exposed to the most de-



structive influences, *unconscious* of the injuries, loss, or punishment it would inevitably sustain. Christ's parable of the "ten talents" may here be applied and its deep significance illustrated, inasmuch as its applicability to the physical or moral life is equally manifest.

"FOR WHOSOEVER HATH, TO HIM SHALL BE GIVEN, AND HE SHALL HAVE MORE ABUNDANTLY; BUT WHOSOEVER HATH NOT, FROM HIM SHALL BE TAKEN AWAY EVEN THAT WHICH HE HATH."

The hand and fingers of the blacksmith, whose sentient power has been daily destroyed by his avocation, bear witness to the truth of the above affirmations. Could he, were his knowledge ever so correct, extract the rapid music of Mozart from the piano, or discriminate the quality of objects where a fine sense of touch is required? Certainly not. For this power he has in a degree destroyed; he has deprived himself, in great measure, of one of the five senses, or instruments employed by the mind for the acquisition of knowledge, and communication with the external world.

Thus then pain or remorse of the Physical Con-

science is one of the greatest blessings that the Creator could bestow ; inasmuch as it is the monitor and guardian instituted to prevent the commission of deeds which would be inevitably accompanied with a loss of power, or absolute sentient Being.

The trivial infliction of pain is namelessly insignificant, compared with that deeper and more vital punishment, **EXTINCTION OF THE SENSE** ; and thereby of the organization which until now had reaped the benefit of its vigilance and protection.

If the above be correct, is it not logically and clearly established, that pain (or remorse of the physical conscience) *is not the punishment of evil, but the indicator of its existence ?* The deep, real, and immutable punishment, is gradual decrease of sentient vitality or perception :—*it is the punishment of Death.*

This is a principle which may be discovered ever active throughout our entire nature ; it pervades every faculty and function of our psychical as well as physical being.

But let us proceed further in illustration.

Suppose, for instance, a man with an average constitution who has lived temperately ; the reward of his obedience to the health law will soon be made apparent, by a more vigorous frame, less liability to disease from external influences, by a greater energy and intensity of the nervous system, and by an increase of instinctive or physically intuitive power, which shall determine him to choose those things which are beneficial, and reject those which are prejudicial to his physical well-being and happiness, *without the aid of intellect or experience.*

But were he to attempt smoking tobacco, or drinking alcoholic liquors (except in very small quantities), headache or sickness would quickly supervene to assert the wrong which had been committed. Here, again, is the blessing of pain, *as indicator of the presence of evil*, calling aloud that the laws of the constitution have been infringed, and urging return to obedience.

It is the fearful, but benevolent, warning that the physical organization is in danger, and that except he desist from such a course of action, an absolute diminution of health and physical vitality will in-

evitably ensue. Moreover there is no means of escape from the punishment inseparably affixed to the first transgression. As the penalty, a portion of the **UNUSED "talent"** will be taken away,—a degree of the perceptive sensibility, or instinctive power will be demanded and must be rendered up; and now the difficulty will increase in choosing instinctively those things which are beneficial, and rejecting those which are prejudicial to the physical well-being and happiness, *without the aid of intellect or experience*. Nature, as well as Christ, declareth that she will not have her talents "hidden in the earth." For unto all those who do so, the voice of eternal justice ever crieth, "*Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath ten talents.*"

*"For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."*

And further, if he obstinately persist in his course of physical sin, if he continually repeat the wrong of which he hath been warned; the punishment will daily increase and become more deadly in its effects. Every successive act of disobedience will

be accompanied by a corresponding decrease of the pain, which at first was vividly experienced ; Nature's Watchman will become paralyzed ; the remonstrances of the *physical conscience* will cease to be heard ; its stinging remorse will become gradually less, and less, and less ; until this guardian and protector is ultimately destroyed ; and now the constitution itself will glide down the hill of perdition, unconscious of its accelerated speed towards the goal of Death.

But let us consider the manifestation of this principle of growth and decrease in the soul itself.

That power which is the great characteristic of the supreme nature of man, and the affirmer of his intimate alliance with Divinity, viz., Conscience, has been implanted within him, subject precisely to those conditions of development which have already been illustrated in their relation to the physical life.

The office of Conscience, according to the generally accepted signification of the term, is that of *guardian* of the moral attributes of man. Conscience bears the same relation to the mind as the

nerves of sense bear to the body. The analogy between them is perfect. The functions of both are to distinguish between good and evil. The former in the moral, the latter in the physical sphere of our being.

The quality of Remorse, or the stings of Conscience, have likewise their semblance in the pain of the nerves of sense, and both are equally instituted as indicators of any injury or wrong committed against the respective natures over which they preside.

Their analogy may be traced still further, by observing the conditions which contribute to their growth and decease.

If an individual with an average degree of conscientious susceptibility were to continually exercise this sentiment in all his actions, it would become daily stronger in itself, its power as monitor of the soul would be ever augmenting, its vigilance would be redoubled, and every volition would be scrupulously scrutinized ere it issued into act. And thus the noble and godlike attributes of man would be nurtured and unfolded into view ; the

mind would soon attain that bourn where just and loving deeds would become instinctive, spontaneous, and natural; or, in other words, the result of impulsive intuitions.

But, on the other hand, if before attaining such a degree of moral perfection, the individual should turn from the path of rectitude, and commence a course of action counter to his superior nature, and in defiance of its counsels, conscience will quickly assert itself as the guardian of the soul; and its stinging intimation of moral disobedience, like the weapon of the bee, will be felt most acutely in the first wound that it inflicts. For if the evil course be persisted in, if timely attention to the benevolent warning be refused,—in the language of daily life, conscience itself will become **SHARED**, its agency less potent, its susceptibility diminished, its kindly intimations both less frequent and less intense, until at length they entirely cease to be heard; and now all self-respect will disappear, all reverence for the God-like in Man will be obliterated, the nobleness of his nature will be forgotten, those lofty faculties and attributes which

constitute him "but a little lower than the angels" will perish in neglect: and now nothing remains but a pitiable wreck, from which we may learn something of Divine justice, and of the authority and immutability of those laws which have been established by the Eternal.

Thus it would appear, if the foregoing be correct, that remorse is one of the wisest and most benevolent of the Creator's institutions, designed to prevent injury of our moral nature; that it is, not strictly speaking the punisher of sin, *but the indicator of its presence*. The true and ever enduring punishment of moral transgressions, is decrease of vitality in the faculties of the moral nature, it is absolute loss of Being. This is the position which seems to need emphatically insisting upon, and to render it still more manifest, we will have recourse to one or two other familiar illustrations.

When a limb has been fractured, and afterwards set, (as it is called,) it is indispensable that it should remain in perfect repose, until the re-union of the fractured portions shall be complete; for



the slightest change in their relative position would materially impede the healing process, and perhaps prevent it altogether; and thus the limb would become useless and lost.

But nature has wisely anticipated these evils, and benevolently provided against their occurrence. Here again has she instituted pain, as the guardian of the organization.\*

For the moment that any force, either wilful or accidental may tend to re-displace the broken por-

\* The doctrine concerning the function of pain, as advocated in the text, is beautifully confirmed by a remarkable anatomical fact relative to the tendonous and ligamentous structures. These portions of the animal economy are destitute of ordinary sensation, and when cut or severed, evince no signs of pain.

The reason of this absence of sensibility appears to be due to the fact that these particular organs are so situated that they are rarely or never subjected to the injurious action of external agents.

But Professor Sharpey of the London University, showed, in one of his lectures, that, according to the celebrated anatomists, Bichat, Velpeau, and Sir Charles Bell, these structures have been provided with a sentient and protective power peculiar to themselves, and which manifests itself in pain whenever they are twisted or sprained, which is the particular and almost only kind of injury to which they are exposed.

tions, or in any way to alter their relative position, the most acute suffering immediately ensues, which indeed is so great, that it is almost impossible to persist in opposing nature's remedial means for the restoration of the injured organ. But should this voice of pain, or (if we may repeat the term) this *physical conscience* be neglected notwithstanding, and the violence be continued, the suffering will be gradually diminished, and ultimately cease, after which the limb may be injured with impunity, and the re-union which nature commenced, and would have completed, may now be utterly thwarted and destroyed. I need not here point out the *benevolence* of this institution of pain, and the greatness of the loss when this sentient power is annihilated, for this must be at once evident to every one capable of a moment's reflection.

But perhaps it may afford us some aid in forming a just estimate of the nature and importance of physical pain, to consider the analogy which exists between it, and intellectual consciousness; for they both preserve an identity of relation to the respective natures over which

they preside. Therefore, if we substitute the words *physical consciousness* for *physical pain*, and then inquire the value of *intellectual consciousness*, and by comparison with it, endeavour to determine the value of *physical consciousness*, we shall be enabled to arrive at somewhat of an approximation to the truth; and thereby to a just conception of the kind and amount of punishment which nature inflicts for any infringement of her laws. For in this case we discover that "loss of *physical consciousness*," or pain, which was the guardian of the organization, is the penalty exacted for every transgression.

It has often been remarked to me in defence of slavery, and as evidence of the superior condition of the slaves, when compared with that of the labourer and mechanic, that they are conscious of no want,—that their desires are limited within the sphere in which they move,—that they have no cares or necessity of thought,—and consequently contentment and happiness are easy of attainment, and exist much more among the slaves, than among the free labourers of the British Isles.

Without wishing to question the accuracy of these statements, I would merely observe that (if they be true), according to the foregoing doctrine, they furnish the most powerful argument that could be advanced by the advocate of abolition. They prove that the faculties of the mind have stopped short in their development,—that the sphere of mental activity has been fearfully contracted,—that the bonds of tyranny cramp the soul's best energies, and dwarf both its intellectual and moral nature, until by reiterated wrong, it sinks into the ignominy of partial death. The *unconsciousness* which is preached up as evidence of the slaves' happy condition, if properly understood, is the most lamentable aspect which man can present, and affirmative of the lowest degree of degradation of which the human mind is susceptible. The greater the *unconsciousness* of the slave, the more pitiable is his condition; the nearer is he to psychical death, and the more hopeless his recovery. If he were *conscious*,—if he were miserable, as it is called,—if he had a sense of his condition,—if the guardian of his

intellectual and moral natures had not been annihilated,—he might arise impelled by an intuition of justice ; and gathering up his energy in one severe and terrible conflict, break the chains which encumber him,—become free and a man.

From what has here been said, it will be clearly perceived, that *the consciousness of the intellect, the conscience of the moral nature, and physical pain, are all identical in the functions they perform in relation to the different natures in which they exist ; and that their office is to warn us of impending injury by the suffering they inflict ; that the acuteness of the suffering itself becomes gradually diminished by reiterated wrong, and finally that the EXTINCTION of pain, or physical sense,—of the remorse of conscience and of intellectual consciousness,—is the real punishment of sin.*

Indeed, if it were otherwise,—if remorse had been instituted as the punishment of sin, the manifestations of Divine justice would be irreconcilable with human reason. For we see that in proportion as sinful actions increase, the pangs of conscience decrease ; they are ever in an inverse

ratio to each other. The being who has ascended highest in the scale of moral perfection is the most susceptible of pain inflicted by a vigilant conscience, and the stings of remorse experienced by such an individual are ever the most acute. But he who by continual sinning has degraded himself to the lowest degree in the scale of moral being, has lost all susceptibility of pain, and the warning voice of nature is no more heard; he who has daily infringed the Divine law, becomes gradually exempt from the vivid suffering to which the being of a more expanded and elevated nature is subject. He is beyond the reach of the conscientious inquisitor, and is enabled to pursue his course of wickedness, alike freed from the bitterness of repentance, or the tortures which an injured conscience can inflict.

Such a view concerning the nature of pain and remorse (and which indeed is now fearfully prevalent) must, if we reflect profoundly, lead us necessarily to the conclusion that the Divine laws, to which we are subject, are imperfect in their operation, inasmuch as they punish the compara-

tively righteous, and permit the wicked to escape ; they exact a tribute from the good, but let the evil go free ; and we should be forced to charge God with manifest cruelty and injustice in the dispensations of his providence ; all hope of human progress would be abandoned, and man's heart the abiding place of habitual despair ; in short, the order of creation would be inverted, and the power of evil, instead of the power of good, would reign upon the earth.

But when we contemplate conscience as the guardian of the highest attributes of man, its acutest pains as the benevolent admonitions of a timely providence to warn him from destruction ; when we find that its office is to detect the existence of evil, which is the destroyer of the soul ; then shall we discover the perfectness of Divine beneficence and justice, and we shall see that all Nature's ordinations are embosomed in beauty. Such a view of our Nature will stimulate us to renewed exertions in the building up and completing our being ; it will inspire us with an unconquerable and never-fading hope, which will shed its bright and genial

influence upon the soul as it advances in the progressive path. Our aspirations will become ennobled; the perception of the innate grandeur and God-like nature of man shall be restored and vivified, the ideal of his power and perfectibility shall be cherished, and increase, and, Christ-like, men shall arise, believing in the possible of its realization.

We cannot therefore concur in the sentiment of Mr. Martineau contained in the quotation prefixed to this Essay, in considering the sufferer of remorse as "the dread type of Hell;" but we should regard him rather as the object of Divine mercy, and in the painful reproaches of an injured conscience, we believe may be discerned the timely interference of a beneficent Providence, careful of his creatures, and striving as it were to warn and rescue them from impending destruction. And thus we are enabled to interpret the significance of the admonitions from the sacred writers; "Despise not thou the chastenings of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son



whom he receiveth." "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

"Beloved, happy is the man whom God correcteth; despise not therefore the chastening of the Almighty."

So long as the mind is open to reproof, so long as conscience retains the power to make itself felt, the evils that may beset are not invincible, and by prompt attention to the indications of the Divine voice within the soul, it may yet retrieve somewhat of its lost estate, in returning from disobedience.

We ought rather to fear and deprecate that condition of the psychical nature, when the "chastenings of the Almighty" are withdrawn; when all susceptibility to moral emotions is destroyed; when conscience itself becomes seared and dead; and consequently all its influence upon action irrevocably lost. When the minds of men are abandoned to their own wickedness, unconscious of the degradation to which they have fallen, and of whom it may be said, "as they did

not like to retain God in their knowledge, He gave them over to a reprobate mind."

This is the punishment which a true apprehension of our nature, and of the laws which govern it, would force us to deplore, and dread. For all minor sufferings are utterly insignificant compared with this dire penalty of sin, viz., loss of vitality, decrease of the intellectual and moral perceptions, *diminution of Being. This may be truly termed the PUNISHMENT of death.*

Indeed, Mr. Martineau himself seems to have a perception of this fact, for in contradiction of his own statement, as quoted in the beginning of this Essay, he says, at page 213 of his book, "The blindness which is induced by all deliberate injury to our moral nature, and which thickens its films as the habit grows, is *one of the most appalling expressions of the Justice of God.* Moral evil is the only thing in his creation of which it is decreed that the more we are familiar with it, the less shall we know of it. The mind that is rich in holiness and the humanities, appreciates every temptation, computes the force of every passion, and discerns

the degradation of every vice, with a precision and clearness unknown to the adept in wrong."

It may perhaps not be out of place, but rather profitable, to inquire what confirmation these principles are capable of obtaining from scriptural authority; and to consider their applicability as agents of beneficence in the mind of man.

Seldom or never do important truths beam at once in all their fulness on the soul, for it would appear that the light of new revelations would be too bright and luminous for our gaze, were they to shine suddenly upon us in their full effulgence.

Therefore infinite wisdom has ordained the universal principle that they shall be intercepted by the clouds of mysticism and obscurity, in their first dawnings on the world, lest their too powerful or sudden radiance should dazzle and make afraid mankind, and cause them to be like the Israelites of old, who said to Moses, "Speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

Every branch of knowledge with which we are acquainted has grown up after this manner.

Astronomy, Geology, Chemistry, and all other departments of philosophy in the physical world, have reached their present degree of perfection by the labours and contributions of many and diversified minds; each discovery becomes the stepping-stone to its successor; and thus, although it may have been left to our times to build up the temple of science, its foundations were laid in the distant ages of Antiquity.

This principle obtains with equal force in reference to the nature and development of the mind itself, and the enunciation of those laws by which it is governed.

Although we may not discover in the records of the past, any evidence that systems of Philosophy, of Ethics, and Theology, such as we now possess, existed in those remote times, yet the Ancients had their Theories, and many truths, of which we have a full and clear perception, were dimly and in part apprehended by them, and seen, as it were, "through a glass, darkly," while they were yet vested in the mantle of ignorance and superstition.

We must not expect, therefore, to find in the sacred writers any continuous or complete expression of the ideas which I have striven to embody ; nevertheless, a perception of their reality may frequently be discovered, which finds an utterance in isolated places, aphoristic and imperfect though it be.

The idea that all recompense of just action consists in an augmentation of vitality, or an enlargement of being, and that all punishment of unjust action consists in a diminution of vitality or a decrease of being, is amply confirmed, both by the writings of the Old Testament and the New.

“ The labour of the righteous tendeth to life.”

“ In the way of righteousness is life ; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.”

“ He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul ; but them that hate me love death.”

“ He that keepeth the commandments keepeth his own soul : but he that despiseth them shall die.”

“ Treasures of wickedness profit nothing : but righteousness delivereth from death.”

“ As righteousness tendeth to life ; so he that pursueth evil, pursueth his own death.”

“ The fruit of righteousness is a tree of life.”

“ The wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life.”

“ Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed ; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

“ For to be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace :

“ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God : for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be.”

Christ is no less emphatic in his enunciations of the like principle. For in addressing his disciples, he says,—

“ Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.”

It is clearly evident that the “ manifold more,”

here indicated, would consist of a continual enlargement and increase of the soul's capacities: for Christ certainly could not allude here to any augmentation of wealth or earthly advantages; since the relinquishing of these things is declared the condition whereby the "manifold more" is to be obtained. Moreover these riches which are offered by Jesus are not to be confined to this world, but to be continued into "the world to come life everlasting." Hence it is impossible that the reward here spoken of can be other than an increase of the mind itself; inasmuch as any other possession could not accompany its possessor to a future life.

St. Paul has said, "For a recompense in the same ye shall also be enlarged."

And again, "God will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality,—ETERNAL LIFE."

"Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all

things richly to enjoy ; that they do good ; that they be rich in good works ; ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, **THAT THEY MAY LAY HOLD OF ETERNAL LIFE.**"

When Christ was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered, and said,—

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation ; neither shall they say, lo, here ! or lo, there ! **FOR, BEHOLD, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.**"

And he also said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Now seeing that, according to the declaration of



Christ, *the Kingdom of God is within us*, it necessarily follows that the injunction last quoted refers to the mind itself; and the laying up treasure in heaven is intended here to signify the development of the psychical nature, the building up and perfecting our being.

He affirms in the majestic language of which he was so skilful a master, "The kingdom of God is within you," thereby pointing out to us, that our happiness is in our hands; that we may create our own heaven within the soul: and hence he admonishes us to lay up treasure there by a continual expansion and accession of our moral and intellectual nature, by cherishing the Divine Spirit, and permitting it to assert its supremacy over us through a life of purity, and the exercise of all the highest faculties of our being.

Thus shall we secure an ever-present Heaven, abounding in treasures, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

In unison with this sublime doctrine of Jesus, that "the Kingdom of God is within us," St.

Paul exclaims, " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy,—which temple ye are."

We will cite a few other passages as evidence in support of the position, that man is recompensed, or punished IN HIMSELF, either by a gradual growth, or a decrease of the intellectual and moral powers, by a progression or a retrogression in the path of perfection, by a vivifying or a deadening of the consciousness and perceptions according to his deeds: and that judgment is awarded for every action in the moment of its performance.

" The way of the wicked is darkness, they know not at what they stumble: but the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

" And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

"The righteous of the perfect shall direct his way, but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness."

These passages are clearly significant of the idea that a spontaneous and impulsive tendency to virtuous actions (which alone are productive of happiness) and an intuitive perception and power of discriminating between good and evil, constitute the reward which is accorded to all those who act uprightly. Moreover Christ has declared, "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;*" or in other words, they shall receive a vivid consciousness of the presence of the Divine Nature within the soul; they shall receive new influxes of the inspiring spirit, a deeper in-seeing power, and *shall* become the high priests and prophets of humanity. On the other hand, "the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness;" for "God is angry with the wicked every day." "Behold the righteous shall be recompensed on the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner."

"The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off their remembrance from the earth,

and a man shall not be established by wickedness."

All infringement of the Divine laws, of love and equity, are inevitably followed by a partial decease of the moral nature : Christ taught this important truth when, discoursing upon the Kingdom of Heaven, in the parable of the talents, he clearly pointed out that the penalty of sin is diminution of the capacities of the sinner : for it is there said,—

"Take therefore the talent from him (meaning the wicked and slothful servant) and give it unto him that hath ten talents ; for unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance : but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath."

Mr. Emerson, amid his varied and beautiful thoughts, has not overlooked this great fact. In his Excellent Essay on Compensation, he says, "Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts, and times, within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, false-

hood, may indeed stand as the great night or shade, on which, as a back-ground, the living universe paints itself forth ; but no fact is begotten by it ; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work any good, it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

“ We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy, and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted the law ? *Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him, he so far deceases from Nature.* In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also ; but should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account.

“ Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue, no penalty to wisdom ; *they are proper additions of being.* In a virtuous action, I properly *am* ; in a virtuous act,

I add to the world; I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing, and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense."

When the truth and importance of these doctrines shall be fully appreciated; when they shall live in the consciousness, and become graven in the universal mind, a great mental and moral revolution will inevitably ensue. Our daily habits and occupations, our desires and aims, nay our very life-purpose, modes of thought, and religion, must be effectually changed and renewed. For when man becomes aware that every outward action aids in the formation and growth of some internal feeling, either imparting new life to the soul, or adding energy to the passions; when he shall discover that every volition is registered in the mind, by an augment of its own quality, by a renewed tendency to good or ill,—his thoughts will be tinged with somewhat of fear and dread, in contemplating the great and immeasurable responsibilities which

are devolved upon him. And the unspeakable sublimity of terror as well as of unbounded hope, arising from this idea of the retrogressive and progressive powers of the soul, will inspire him with the profoundest reverence and awe, for the grandeur and magnificence of his nature. Moreover, the perception of this idea will impart a value and emphasis to every act, that it could not otherwise acquire.

Actions will be regarded as the instruments wherewith the character is formed; as the means furnished by the Creator for effecting the soul's development and perfection. So soon as man shall discern that his destiny is in his own hands, and that God has endued him with the capability of becoming the author of his own happiness or misery, according to the nature of his deeds, he will need no outward law, no threat or fear of future punishment, to urge him in the pursuit of a life of truth, beneficence and love.

The importance of just actions will become so manifest, that they will assume a sacred character. Man's consciousness will be ennobled; and the soul, no longer a slave to the passions of cupidity

and lust, shall assert itself in all the beauty and dignity of its ever-expanding and God-like nature.

Man will again believe his perfectibility to be no mere chimera of the imagination, not a doctrine held only by the rapturous idealist and poet; but a reality of which the mind experiences an ever-present and most vivid intuition. And its irrepressible hope shall yet be actualized in time by the reign of the spirit of Christ or Love upon the earth, whereby all unjust laws will be abolished, all poverty and crime forgotten, and men "shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

"A brighter morn awaits the human day,  
When every transfer of Earth's natural gifts  
Shall be a commerce of good words and works;  
When poverty and wealth, the thirst of fame,  
The fear of infamy, disease, and woe,  
War, with its million horrors, and fierce hell  
Shall live but in the memory of time,  
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,  
Look back, and shudder at his younger years."

SHELLEY.



These aspirations and prophecies of the soul are the token and pledge of their own fulfilment. They are the assertion of the mind's capacity of eternal progression.

This attribute is the rock on which an infinite hope, and a faith piercing even the darkest veil of futurity, may securely rest in undisturbed repose. And as all bodies fall to the earth in a mathematically accelerated ratio, the nearer they approach it ; so the spirit, the nearer it approaches perfection, is increased in its progressive power.

## ETHICAL OBSERVATIONS.

WRITTEN DURING THE PERUSAL OF THE REV. JAMES  
MARTINEAU'S WORK, ENTITLED, "ENDEAVOURS  
AFTER THE CHRISTIAN LIFE."

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### CONCEPTION OF DEITY.

"It is from our own human nature, from its deep experiences, and earnest affections, that we form our conceptions of Deity."\*—p. 1. .

God is each man's prefigured ideal of perfection; and, consequently, varies in his attributes and character, in conformity to the nature of each man's mental and psychical constitution. Each individual unconsciously regards the Deity as the complement of his own Being.

### THE NATURE OF CHRIST.

"The casual vicissitudes of feeling in Christ, his alternations of anxiety and hope, of rejoicing and of tears, have often been appealed to, as traces of his having had a like nature with our own. The appeal is just, and shows us that he was im-

\* The whole of the following observations were written in reference to the particular passages in Mr. Martineau's book by which they are preceded.

pressed as we are by those outward incidents which make the morning happy and the evening sad."—p. 3.

Christ is the most perfect realization of humanity in its fulness that has *as yet* appeared in the world: his manifestations are affirmative of his *fuller expansion and development* of a nature common with our own. He is the personification of the greatest degree of psychical advance and progress that man has *yet* attained in assimilation towards the perfection of God.

He was organized and framed in the same mould with us; and is therefore a typification, promise, and assurance of what we each may attain, and of the perfectibility of human nature. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

Christ in his utterances, but more emphatically *in his life*, points to the possible of Man.

#### THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

"To the eye of the outward observer, he (Christ, when tempted in the wilderness) may appear altogether quiet, sitting on the bleak rock in the collapse of feebleness and rest. Nevertheless,

in that still form is the most terrible of conflicts ; an exchange of awful defiances between Heaven and Hell ; a heaving and wrestling of immortal powers, doing battle for the mind of Jesus, and suspending on that moment the souls of millions and the destinies of the world."—p. 9.

The mind contains within itself the living germ of its own perfection, and will ever assert its growing and expanding power ; it is therefore vain and indicative of a want of faith *in*, and a low estimate of, human nature, to say that the destiny of the world was suspended upon the conflict of Christ with his temptations. The nature of the soul is progressive, and it must of necessity, through its successive, gradual, but ~~sure~~ unfoldings and development, have given utterance to those truths and revelations of the nature of the soul which we now possess under the name of Christianity, so soon as any other mind had reached that state of development and advance in psychical progression which Jesus exhibited. For these revelations lie infolded and concealed under the successive coverings of the semi-expanded spirit ; as beauty lies imprisoned within the leaves of the

rosebud ; and both require but time and growth for their full manifestation.

#### HUMAN DUTY.

“ When the first sanguine enterprises of conscience seem to fail, when a cloud, like that which fell upon Christ’s future, descends upon the prospects of the good ; when the evils against which he has taken up his vow withstand the siege of his enthusiasm, and years ebb away, and strength departs, with no visible impression made ; the man mighty of heart may find the controversy great, whether to go on and bear up against such sorrows of the soul. But if he be wise, he clings more firmly to his fidelity, and thinks more truly of his mission, wherein he is appointed not to do much, but to do well.”—pp. 15-16.

Rather say, man is *not* appointed to do much, but to **BE** good. It is a great and lamentable error in almost all our systems of theology and ethics, and more especially in our teachings, that we talk so much of **DOING**, instead of **BEING**. If a man **BE** good, all his **DOINGS** will of necessity be **WELL DOINGS**. If he **BE** not good, all his attempts at goodness in actions will be vain and ineffectual, for they lack the spirit which should give them permanent power and vitality, and thus

they die. We have exclaimed too long for measures instead of men, and have been content with a false *vraisemblance* rather than the reality. Hence so few *radical* reforms have been effected. If a man be true and a lover, all his actions must perforce be true and in the spirit of love. The doings are only affirmative of the nature of the being. "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." "A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; but an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil, for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."\*

Hence *well-doing* is the necessary consequent and affirmative of *well-being*. Spirit is antecedent to action, and if the spirit be essentially good or God-like, it is a fountain whence shall issue countless thousands of actions whose nature partaketh of the same quality. It is as the central luminary radiating outwards, which tingeth all things with its own colour, and converteth them to the beauty and semblance of itself.

\* Christ.

## MAN'S RELATION TO DEITY.

"The true natural language of devotion declares the living contact of the Divine Spirit with the human, the mystic implication of his nature with ours, and ours with his."—p. 20.

"I and my Father are one." \*

Or in other words, the regenerate human nature is a continuation into substance or visible form of the Divine nature. It is the spirit made manifest in the flesh. It is the partial unveiling of Deity to man.

## INWARD REGENERATION.

"The finest sense, the profoundest knowledge, the most unquestionable taste, often prove an unequal match for insignificant irritations; and a man whose philosophy subdues nature, and whose force of thought and purpose gives him ascendancy over men, may keep in his own temper an unvanquished enemy at home."—p. 42.

The greatest and most efficient of all reforms, is **SELF-REFORM**. Once get this effectually realized, and thy work is accomplished. Then thou *hast* and *art* a continual and never-failing source whence reforms without number shall ever flow. They shall emanate from thee as light from the sun.

\* Christ.

Self-reform, or being born again of the spirit, or an influx of the divine nature into the soul, is the "fountain of living water springing up into everlasting life." The divinely-inspired spirit will ever express its nature, by an infinitude of *reforms*, all of which will be *true forms*.

## HAPPINESS.

"Human nature, trained in the school of Christianity, throws away as false the delineations of piety in the disguise of Hebe, and declares that there is something higher far than happiness; that thought, which is ever full of care and trouble, is better far; that all true and disinterested affection, which often is called to mourn, is better still; that the devoted allegiance of conscience to duty and to God,—which ever has in it more of penitence than of joy,—is noblest of all."—p. 58.

As the child that chaseth its own shadow is perpetually thwarted in its attempts to compass that which always seemeth close within its reach, so happiness, when apparently nearest within the grasp, will ever elude the pursuit of those who seek her. God is to us the embodiment of our most perfect ideal of the perfect; and he is



infinite in *Being*. The extent of happiness is proportioned to the extent of Being. Now man's great aim and life-purpose must be to narrow the breach,—to destroy the difference between his *actual* and his ideal.

He must discover and feel that his soul sustaineth the same relation to this Universe as the vegetable seed does to the earth. It is the place where it hath been planted to detect and appropriate nourishment for its growth, expansion, and development. He must live in the consciousness of a continual and everlasting progression towards the realization of his ideal of the perfection of God. He must learn to live in the vivid perception *that life is enough*, and hence a tranquillity ariseth out of the knowledge that nothing can work him substantial harm, but what impedeth his increase and progression of Being, or his assimilation towards the fulness of God.

#### THE NATURE OF PEACE.

“ Herein does his (Christ's) peace differ from that which ‘the world giveth;’ that its prime essential is not ease, but strife; not self-indulgence,

but self-sacrifice; not acquiescence in evil for the sake of quiet, but conflict with it for the sake of God; not, in short, a prudent accommodation of the mind to the world, but a resolute subjugation of the world to the best conceptions of the mind."

"The word 'Peace' denotes the absence of jar and conflict; a condition free from the restlessness of fruitless desire, the forebodings of anxiety, the stings of enmity."—p. 77.

Is there not an evident contradiction in this page concerning the nature of Peace? At line 11 it is said, that "its prime essential is not ease, but strife, conflict," &c., &c.; and at line 23 it is defined quite otherwise. What is here meant by this singular paradox, I am unable to comprehend.

I understand Peace and tranquillity of the soul to consist in the existence and uninterrupted action of a being whose every volition is productive of joy. A being whose nature hath been built up in the spirit of Love; whose soul hath reached such heights in the attainment of perfection, that it hath risen above passion, and reached the bourn where temptation hath lost its power, and its very influence becomes unfelt; and where choice is no

more necessary or known. When the Spirit shall have riven asunder and cast away all fetters of an earthly nature, wherewith it is now so darkly bound ; when it shall have ascended from the low vale of sense and convention to the lofty mount of impulsive intuition, where virtue would become a necessity, and the soul an everlasting and living fountain of God-like actions springing forth from the rich fulness of its own spontaneity ; when the psychical nature shall have become thus pure and elevated,—it will be embosomed in a calm of profoundest repose ; it will transcend all necessity of “ self-denial ” and “ self-sacrifice,” and all possibility of “ conflict ” and “ strife ; ” it will pass even the confines of the region of fear, doubt, or hope, and become ensphered in the soft ether of *perfect faith, whence ariseth* deepest tranquillity and fulness of “ Peace.”

Faith, the generator of joy and peace, *cometh of Wisdom and Purity*, and hence it is a word of degrees, varying in its amount in each possessor ; so, consequently, is “ Peace ; ” and in precise proportion to the amount of Faith, *which hath been*

*built on the foundations of Wisdom and Purity, will be the amount of tranquillity, happiness, and "Peace."*

## CHRISTIANITY.

"In no time or country has Christianity ever been exhibited in its simple integrity."—p. 107.

Or, in no time or country has man attained his full stature; never has his psychical nature been fully unfolded and expanded into perfect development; nay, it hath never approached this condition; for if it had, Christianity in its simple integrity would have been exhibited. Or in other words, the sublime truths concerning the nature and attributes of man's psychical being would have been enunciated; his relations and connection with Divinity would have been proclaimed.

All revelations, utterances and discoveries, whether they be relating to the laws of the outward universe, or to our own physical, intellectual or moral nature; all declarations concerning God or the soul, be they called "Christianity," or by any other name whatsoever—are only indicative or affirmative of the successive unfoldings and expansion

of man's being, as the unfurling of the scroll in which they have ever lain inscribed. They are the outward expression and manifestation of the soul's increasing development, which as it opens and progresses, must of necessity unfold and exhibit these discoveries or hidden treasures of its exhaustless store house; which it will ever display and strew around in its path onwards, as the sure marks of its track and advance, as the footprints of its everlasting progression.

## THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

"The soul of its (Christianity's) author was the only pure and perfect expression of its spirit; it was at once the creator and sole director of his mind;—born within that palace to be its Lord." —p. 107.

It appears to me that we should be much nearer the truth, were we entirely to reverse this sentence, and say, Christianity was only the pure and perfect expression of the soul of its author, Christ, who was its sole creator and director; it was the born offspring of his spirit, over which he was the indisputable Lord.

## HUMAN DUTY.

"Happy they who discern how little the palace can add to the sincere joy of a loving and Christian home, and feel that nature dwells at the centre after all; who have the firmness to retire to that inner region, and embrace the toils of reason, the labours of sympathy, the strife of conscience, the exhaustless ambition of Duty, as Heaven's own way to combine the divinest activity with the profoundest repose."—p. 114.

Were man's nature acting in harmony, and in obedience to the laws which *ought* to govern it, and which are imprinted in his constitution, there could be no *toils* of reason, nor *labours* of sympathy, nor *strife* of conscience; but Duty would be generative of, and constitute, happiness or Heaven.

## THE LAW OF LOVE.

"I need not stop to acknowledge what is too plain for any one to doubt, that this sanctity of property from invasion is, to any society, the very cement of its civilization."—p. 115.

I confess myself compelled to pause before acknowledging what seems to me not too plain for any one to doubt, "that this sanctity of property from invasion is, to any society, the very cement of

its civilization ;" for dare we trace out and behold what would be the effects of the action of Christ's *love principle* in this matter, we should soon discover that it would submerge all landmarks and distinctions of property. No one would take more than his absolute and essential needs might require. The law of justice would be superseded, blended and contained in the higher law of love, and the limitations of "*meum* and *tuum*" would be heard of no more.

Every philanthropist that is born into the world is an additional step in the path of progression towards this condition of things, which it may be well to observe can never be realized by any precipitate methods, or sudden revolutions, but by the inconceivably gentle, silent, and almost imperceptible growths of Love in the human heart, which will transform men and nations from enemies into friends ; individual and national *competitors* into amicable and mutual *helpers*, whose multifarious and diversified interests shall be blended, and one common aim and life-purpose inspire and animate all. As indication and pledge of this progressive

change, men DO, and SHALL appear influenced by the Spirit of Love, who, instead of being as hitherto the tyrants and oppressors, shall become the stewards and servants of humanity.

THE EXISTENCE OF SORROWS.

"However impatient some minds may feel at our helpless struggles with this difficulty (the existence of sorrows), the thoughtful will acquiesce in them tranquilly."—p. 156.

"To the demand of the human heart for less suffering and a more liberal dispensation of happiness, no answer *as from God* can be discovered in Scripture or in philosophy; and all attempts to assign *his* reasons for the present adjustment of the world in this respect, have, I believe, signally failed."—p. 157.

However impatient some minds may feel at our helpless struggles with this difficulty (the existence of sorrows) the thoughtful will NOT acquiesce in them tranquilly. If man possess not the attribute of *perfectibility* in his nature, and, consequently, capability of perfect happiness, he is a defect and exception in the Universe, and God is chargeable with injustice, and want of beneficence in his creation. All suffering and sorrows, whether physical



or psychical, *come of the transgression of God's laws, or Sin*; either by the individual suffering, or his ancestors, or by the society of which he forms a part, and for which he is thereby partially responsible.

This suffering in the individual for the sins of society is a wise and benevolent ordination of the Creator, whereby he (the individual) is called upon to stretch out the hand of help to rescue his fallen brethren, and reinstate them in the paths of obedience and virtue. Indeed, we have a remarkable illustration of the action of this social law, as instituted by Divine Providence in the sufferings and crucifixion of Jesus Christ; and I may add, in the sufferings of all just and good men from the beginning up to this present time. If the world were not ignorant and sinful, these wise and holy men could have no sorrow. But God, in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, has beautifully ordained that the just shall suffer for the unjust, to the end that they may be inspired with sympathy and love for their fellow-creatures; and be thereby urged to unceasing energy in the labour-field of human regeneration, until all become enlightened

by their vivifying influence, and their souls matured and expanded into the fulness of God. Such are the means of humanity's progression and deliverance from present sufferings and sorrows; therefore let us hope for the future that "the thoughtful will not acquiesce in them tranquilly." "For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." \*

The power of sin implies necessarily the power of holiness; the one idea is bound with, and a part of, the other, as much as empty and full, wet and dry, or the two opposite poles of the sphere. Now if man is capable of perfect holiness, he is capable of perfect happiness; because the latter is generated by the former; and therefore God is beneficent and just.

#### CONCEPTIONS OF THE FUTURE.

"How do we make up our conceptions of the

\* Christ.

amount of happiness which we may fittingly expect? There is but one school in which all our expectations are trained, viz., experience; but one source of belief respecting the future, viz., knowledge of the past; that which actually *has been* dictates all our ideas of what possibly may be."—p. 158.

As opposed to the foregoing sentiment, I will transcribe a beautiful passage from an admirable American author, which is in perfect accordance with my own feelings and views on the subject.

"The argument which is always forthcoming to silence those who conceive extraordinary hopes of man, namely, the appeal to experience, is for ever invalid and vain. A mightier hope abolishes despair. We give up the past to the objector, and yet we hope. He must explain this hope. We grant that human life is mean; BUT HOW DID WE FIND IT OUT THAT IT WAS MEAN?" \*

#### IDEAL OF PERFECTION.

"That image then of adequately happy life which we complain of not realizing; that picture which would perfect our content,—is a repetition of what we have felt, a miniature of our habitual

\* Emerson.

consciousness, painted in the colours of positive experience. Our present ideal is God's past reality."—p. 158.

"Our present ideal" OUGHT NOT to be "God's past reality;" but HIS PRESENT PERFECTION OF BEING. In fact, notwithstanding all that may be said, God ever is to each man, consciously or unconsciously, his ideal and embodiment of perfection, and consequently of happiness; for happiness cometh of perfection. Therefore, as man's nature is infinitely progressive, it will ever aspire after a realization, expansion, and accession of those attributes which are perfect and infinite in Divinity.

#### CAUSE OF SUFFERING.

"With the sufferer, it is his pain that appears to be a thing of course, and to require no explanation, while his relief is reverently welcomed as a divine interposition, and, as a breath of heaven, caresses the heart into melodies of praise."—p. 160.

All suffering requires explanation and repentance, and demands that the sin cause be removed. For all suffering is the effect of Sin, or the indicator of disobedience to those laws of

the Creator which he has ordained for our well-being and happiness.

THE EVILS OF OUR LOT.

"Our complaints against the evils of our lot would appear to indicate a wrong state of mind towards God. The disappointment in which they originate is the result of happy experience; and had we never been blessed, we could never be querulous."—pp. 163-4.

Would it not be more correct to say, "the EVILS of our lot would appear to indicate a wrong state of mind towards God?" They originate IN SIN; and had we never been sinful, we could never be querulous.

CHARACTER OF RELIGION.

"All true religion is a sense of want; and where want goes to sleep upon possession, it becomes bewildered, and when occasionally opening its eyes, sees nothing with the clearness of reality."—p. 171.

All true, essential religion is reunion of the human, with the Divine Nature. It is growth, expansion, increase, and development of the soul germ; which hath been planted in materiality, to

detect nourishment and assimilate it to itself; to open and unfold its faculties, into the perfect image of its Creator.

#### SPHERE OF BENEVOLENCE.

"Benevolence, to be successful, must work in the way of prevention and anticipation—at the very least pulling resolutely down each confused and hurtful thing as it appears."—p. 277.

Benevolence, to be successful, must work in the way of *building up that which is good*, NOT in resolutely pulling down that which is evil. It must deal with the NEW, and not with the OLD. It must live in the future, regardless of the past, and all its confusions and hurtful things, intent only upon the realization of its own bright ideal; and all evils and errors will die of inanition.

#### HUMAN ANTICIPATIONS.

"Who will not confess a strong sympathy with the early Christians' delight, in anticipating certain great and divine revolutions within their own generation."—p. 284.

"There is a peculiar fascination in the thought of personally experiencing the realization of one's social dreams, of quickening a too tardy Provi-

dence to the pace of our fleeting years, and finding one race of men give promise of perfection during our mortal instead of our immortal lives. \* \* \* \* The mistake of the early church is not theirs alone ; it is a human rather than a theological *error*."—p. 285.

Were man wisely and fully instructed, and conscious of the true nature of his own being, he would discover that his essential happiness depends not upon witnessing the fruits of his own efforts, or the realization of his own social dreams of moral reformation, during his mortal, instead of his immortal life. He would live in the perception that **LIFE** is enough, and that virtue, which primarily consists in continual psychical creations, successive expansions of, and addition to, his **BEING**, through **ACTION**, receives in these a compensation and reward far transcending all that external success can bestow.

THE END.





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